a work which would show at one view, how every part of a building might ordinarily be executed; in one plate we would show together every variety of execution in sashes, casements, and details of that description; in others respectively, the various forms of gutters, the modes of joining and flashing lead and zinc, the different bonds of brickwork, the methods of laying floor boards, the kinds of doors, and the different ways of hanging and hingeing them, the varieties of roof covering, the different methods of laying slates and tiles. Now, much has been done in some departments,—for example, different forms of roofs and *naked flooring* are collected together in more than one work of authority; still the collection might be very greatly extended, and published in a form more useful for reference. But the work which we contemplate, is one of a far more comprehensive nature. We would have in it, such things as smoke-pipes and ventilating cowls, water-closets, and kitchen ranges; for it is matter of this description, which every one is supposed to be acquainted with, which makes up the greatest tax upon the time of the architect, withdraws his attention from the art, or at best prevents through ignorance, his availing himself of those forms which he could modify to his purpose. Such a work should also, for example, specify the different sizes of pipes, the different kinds of materials used in various parts of the kingdom:—in the majority of cases a tabular arrangement of little more than names would suffice. The work would thus be in the full sense of the term, a manual, and could not fail to produce the most beneficial effect upon the *art* of architecture, by allowing the opportunity for the higher branches of the architects' practice, which require time and study. Such a manual would be useful to old and young, but to the latter it would be invaluable, for whilst now, to these, the difficulty is often so great of obtaining such requisite particulars at all, the vigour of the mind is wasted at that very time of life, when the faculty of taste would be capable of cultivation to the best advantage.

We have entered thus far into one of the necessities of architectural practice, because we wished to shew the means by which that amount and quality of knowledge required to form the architect, might be gained without a tax upon the energies scarcely to be advised. We had imputed to architects certain deficiences in elementary and professional knowledge, and we feel that we can be answered by the plea of the inadequacy of life and time, so long as the means of transacting the business of the profession are so inadequate. Certain things must be attended to, inseparable from the most important object, and therefore an architect fully competent to undertake whatever he may be called upon to do, is an exception, and therefore it can hardly be a matter for surprise, that so few have a proper estimate of what ought to be requisite qualifications. Thus each overrates the abilities which he may happen to possess. He who has great power in delineation, speaks contemptuously of So and So, who never designed an elevation, or drew a moulding, whilst So and So thanks heaven that he never wasted his time about drawing, which he can get others to do, and that he knows the difference between good work and bad. Each thinks that his particular qualifications are those which make the architect. But both will have to gain or buy the assistance of others in points, in the design and the conduct of a building; therefore neither can be considered fairly to claim the title of architect, since both are deficient in abilities which are inseparable from the pursuit of architecture as a profession. It cannot be denied, that the architect is now often not the competent professor of all that forms part of his profession and his art, but rather the head of an office, the superintendent of departments in which he himself may have no skill. Supposing a theatre has to be built,—to one person he confides every thing that relates to the heating, is advised by another as to the ventilation; decorators, upholsterers, and artists he employs to *design* as well as to execute—each in their several departments. And when the building is completed, how little is seen of the unity which should characterize the work, how little is there of the hand or thought of the architect.

So, as we have heard it said, standing in the profession of architecture becomes a consequence, not of taste in design, or skill in construction,—not of the full possession of ability in what constitutes architecture, but of length of purse;—genius and taste "without money are more profitless than sea-weed."

Thus it is capable of demonstration, that the anomalous state in which architecture is, compared with other professions, is, in a great measure, to be attributed to defects at the outset, and to those which it is the business of architects themselves to remedy. For, what may be taken to be the opinion of the world, from which the employment of architects, and their influence in bringing about good construction, and improvement of taste, is to spring? That this improvement is not to be looked for from architects, who are incapable of it. That, for any matter connected with the arrangement, ventilation, construction, and decoration of buildings, an architect may, in the greater number of instances, be dispensed with. And, so long as the public can apply to the profession of architecture, and not find, as they would in a parallel case in any other profession, that the professor has the means within himself of supplying the object and the want, so long will there be reason for that opinion, one which we are convinced is very extensively prevalent, although perhaps less from any *failure* in supplying the demand, than from want of proper alacrity in anticipating and providing for it—a want sure to exist where there has been no solid foundation in a carefully devised, and complete *elementary* course, and where every aid of that nature which may be called mechanical, is so absolutely essential, and yet so inadequately provided.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE.

Sir,—There is no creature in this living, breathing world of ours so ill-used, so severely tasked, so hard ridden, as your *hobby-horse*. No matter in what department the animal may be classed, for the genera and species vary considerably, whether it be your sanatory hobby, your currency hobby, your educational hobby, or your fine art hobby, only let the rider be fairly astride and once started, and away he goes, to the admiration of all beholders, setting at nought every obstacle which may present itself to less sanguine imaginations, until the poor animal is completely ridden to death.

On a pegasus of this description, Mr. Robert Kerr seems to have mounted, and the pace at which he appears to be travelling is certainly something of a killing one, to judge by the article on the subject above-named in The Builder of July 17th. To our old-fashioned notions, the road on which he is cantering his hobby, denominated "The Beautiful," is likely to terminate in a quagmire, and for the purpose of giving a friendly warning, these few remarks are penned. Let us, however, do justice to the article in question. The object at which it aims, the recommendations given as to the employment of precedent, and the freshness and vigour with which they are enforced, are worthy of all commendation. We think, at the same time, that we perceive some confusion of ideas in the mode in which the term "Style" is used, and we are still more strongly of opinion, that the doctrine laid down, that beauty in architecture has no connection whatever with "the contriving of plans," and is something to be kept altogether distinct from the material elements out of which this beauty is to be evoked, is essentially vicious in principle, and misleading in its tendency. Let us refer to each of these subjects separately.

The "essence of style," we are told, "lies simply in the essence (whatever this may be) of character and expression and sentiment,—a varied essence developed in varied manifestation." With this definition we have no quarrel, except that the triple use of the word "essence" rather detracts from than adds to its clearness. In this view we understand by the term "style," simply the evidence of the artist's mind infused into his work, imparting its character of severity or richness, of grace or massiveness, of complexity or simplicity, according to the nature of the work, and the artist's intention and purpose. In this sense the application of the word "style" is almost, if not entirely, identical with its application to the measured melody of a Milton, the tumid periods of a Johnson, the placid sweetness of a Guido, or the richly gushing harmonies of a Mozart; or, as Mr. Kerr has himself expressed it, "In music, in painting, in poetry, in architecture, there are a thousand ways to pleasure—a thousand *styles*—all equally delightful and beautiful and true."

But Mr. Kerr proceeds to say,—"The present practice of architecture lying entirely in the use of the *systems of design* collected from antiquity, there are demanded of our architects attainments in respect of *style*—in knowledge of certain systems of its variety—which hitherto were never required to be displayed," &c. Now, very little reflection is requisite to perceive that here the term is altogether changed in its meaning, by its application to discriminate between the "various *systems of design*" (a happy phrase, by the way), Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Gothic, &c., which have successively prevailed. These are merely the conventional arrangements—the language, in fact, in which the artist's ideas are to be expressed, and in which the peculiar characteristics of his genius must be displayed. It is true that each of these modes or systems has its own peculiar capabilities, as is the case also with the various languages in which authors have written, but there is a wonderful variety of styles and beauties to be evolved from each. Look, for instance, at the grace displayed in the monument of Lysicrates compared with the majesty of the Parthenon, or see the diversity still more exemplified in the sombre massiveness of the crypt of the fourteenth century, contrasted with the lightness and elegance of the lady-chapels and chantries of the same period. Surely then the same term can hardly be used with propriety, to designate both an entire system of architecture and the various expressions and shades of character of which it is capable. We are quite aware that in the loose manner in which language is frequently applied to subjects of this kind, a term is often employed in two or more senses, which has been eminently the case with the one under discussion; but if clear and definite ideas are valuable in the study of art, it is highly desirable that the exact meaning of the terms employed should be established.

Turn we now to the second subject hinted at above. Art, according to Mr. Kerr (architectural art, be it understood), is a pure abstraction, an etherial essence, disdaining all connection with the matter on which it has to work, turning up its angelic proboscis with contempt at such vulgar elements as stone and brick and timber and iron. This is no exaggeration, for we are told, that "to teach the learner the clear distinctness of the pure art, from the mere means and modes of its embodiment—is to give him the best first lesson in its true philosophy." Again, "the contriving of plans—with all other things which are very excellent in their way, and very indispensable in their value, but which have no connection with the subject, we must quite set aside for the time, and abstract the perfectly separate fine art to stand alone in the mere nature of itself, before we can hope to secure that nicety of judgment which so delicate a subject of thought demands."

We are further informed, that "the discernment of the philosophy of style can never be hoped for till the eye can look steadily at that pure art in which style has its being."

We here very naturally inquire what is this fine-art architecture, this pure abstraction? how is it to be comprehended? in what manner are we to become acquainted with such a spiritual essence, which refuses to manifest itself by outward and visible signs? We may ask the question, but our readers will in vain search Mr. Kerr's paper for a reply. He commences his fifth paragraph thus—"Having thus defined art," but those who can discover in the previous part of the article any such definition will be more successful than we have been. We are repeatedly told what art is not, but the nearest approach to telling us what it is, is the information that it is "an integer of thought, no longer confounded with the calculation of cost, or the contriving of builders' work according to the Act."

We fear that if, taking Mr. Kerr's advice, we attempt "to look steadily" at this "integer of thought," we shall find, like the clown in the *Twelfth Night*, that "It hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clear stones

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